

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR EU INSTITUTIONS
TOWARDS COMPETITIVE,
INNOVATIVE,
RESILIENT, AND
SUSTAINABLE
EU FOOD
SYSTEMS



EU Specialty Food Ingredients, representing over 200 manufacturers of food ingredients, recognizes the European Commission's ongoing commitment to advancing the climate targets established under the previous mandate. The Association encourages President von der Leyen, Members of the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union to continue pursuing legislative proposals that will facilitate the transition towards Competitive, Innovative, Resilient, and Sustainable EU food systems. Accordingly, EU Specialty Food Ingredients calls on the Commission to maintain its dedication to the sustainable transformation of the agri-food supply chain while paying attention to the competitiveness of all the actors involved.

The food and drink manufacturing sector is a vital component of the EU agri-food ecosystem. With an annual turnover of approximately 1.2 trillion euros and holding the position as the world's leading exporter of Processed Agricultural Products (PAPs), it stands as the largest manufacturing industry within the EU; an achievement significantly dependent on specialty ingredients. As part of the broader food & drink sector, the specialty food ingredients sector leads innovation, delivering technological and nutritional benefits to processed foods and offering effective solutions for specific dietary requirements through the application of advanced technologies aligned with global sustainability objectives.

Thus, EU Specialty Food Ingredients reiterates the key messages outlined in its previous pledge¹ and offers the following key recommendations to be taken into account in relevant EU strategies and initiatives, namely the Competitiveness Compass, the Clean Industrial Deal, as conditions to achieve the legislative proposals and initiatives identified in the 2025 Commission work programme (please find on p.5 a non-exhaustive overview of ongoing and upcoming initiatives relevant to the specialty food ingredients industry) to achieve **competitive, innovative, resilient, and sustainable EU food systems**.

¹ Five requests towards a sustainable, resilient and innovative EU food system framework legislation

1. TOWARDS **COMPETITIVE** EU AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

- **Strengthen the competitiveness** of all stakeholders within the EU food system, including specialty food ingredient manufacturers, through initiatives tailored to the specific needs of various EU industrial ecosystems. This is particularly relevant to the food and drink manufacturing sector, which constitutes the largest manufacturing industry within the European Union.
- **Ensure** that the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) operates at optimal performance to enhance the global competitiveness of the EU agri-food sector, reducing the unpredictability of the Risk Assessment process and including close cooperation with the applicants and the Member States experts and institutions.
- **Explore** targeted investments and design financial support opportunities tailored for food industry innovation, international competitiveness, and technological development and decarbonization investments.
- **Enhance** the resilience of the EU food system by the creation of a quick and versatile engagement mechanism with Food Business Operators (FBO) in case of crisis, specifically for the food industry.
- **Streamline** funding process and target support to encourage public-private partnerships to accelerate R&D and enhance funding access for SMEs/Mid-Caps.

2. TOWARDS **INNOVATIVE** EU AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

- **Promote** technological advancement which enables innovation in specialty food ingredients businesses and strengthen agri-food production including through AI, digital tools, and robotics.
- **Facilitate** the expansion of innovation and establish mechanisms to enable the production of innovative products, from prototypes to large-scale manufacturing and market uptake. This includes introducing provisions that simplify the process for operators to access the EU market and offer greater long-term predictability and adaptability for businesses.
- **Encourage** the EU institutions to maintain responsible and coherent science-based communication to mitigate cultural bias and avoid polarizations.
- **Support** the development of specialty food ingredients to address areas such as food security, dietary requirements, climate change, malnutrition, and new dietary needs.
- **Engage** in science-based dialogues within the agri-food supply chain which will support the uptake of innovative solutions.

3. TOWARDS **RESILIENT** EU AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

- **Shape** a fit for purpose and predictable regulatory framework that can adapt to an evolving society and agri-food systems.
- **Outline** pragmatic, ambitious and viable initiatives to address future global challenges, including climate changes mitigation.
- **Encourage** the research and the development of new ingredients and technologies for the transition toward a sustainable food system and sustainable diets (i.e. alternative protein and fermentation).
- **Acknowledge** the circularity of agri-food systems and further support the deployment of circular approaches in the agri-food system with specific holistic and forward-looking legislative actions.

4. TOWARDS **SUSTAINABLE** EU AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

- **Recognise** the specialty food ingredients sector's ongoing efforts towards climate change adaptation and mitigation, in the creation of healthier ingredients, reduction of food waste, and promotion a circular and efficient input use and production.
- **Establish** an integrated EU Agri-Food System that acknowledges the role of the food industry within the agri-food chain and promotes cooperation throughout the supply chain.
- **Create** effective, forward-looking strategies to advance the three pillars of sustainability in the EU food industry.
- **Acknowledge** the commitments by signatories and promote the Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices among the food supply chain operators, Member States, and consumers.
- **Improve** the regulatory efficiency of legislation through a practical, on-the-ground approach to strengthen the resilience of the EU food supply chain, utilizing systematic evaluations, targeted consultations, and ongoing open dialogue with sector representatives.

ANNEX I: NON-EXHAUSTIVE OVERVIEW OF ONGOING AND UPCOMING INITIATIVES RELEVANT TO THE SPECIALTY FOOD INGREDIENTS INDUSTRY

1. COMPETITIVE	2. INNOVATIVE	3. RESILIENT	4. SUSTAINABLE
Competitiveness Compass	Biotech act	Multiannual Financial Framework	Vision for agriculture and food (including the Food Dialogue)
Omnibus package on sustainability	Life science 2030 strategy	Start up and scale up strategy	One health
Omnibus package on investment simplification	Innovation act	EU agri-food transition pathway stakeholder support platform	Bioeconomy strategy
Omnibus package, including small mid-caps and removal of paper requirements	EFSA performance review	Food waste reduction targets	Circular Economy Act
Clean Industrial Deal	Horizon Europe (2025 program – aligned with Competitive Compass on R&I)	EU Agri-food Platform ²	Code of Conduct for Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices
	The European Board for Agriculture and Food		Omnibus package food & feed security

² This initiative is linked to: the EC "[Transition pathway](#)' for the agri-food sector' and the '[EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices](#)'.



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September 2025